



The Ashlar



October 2020

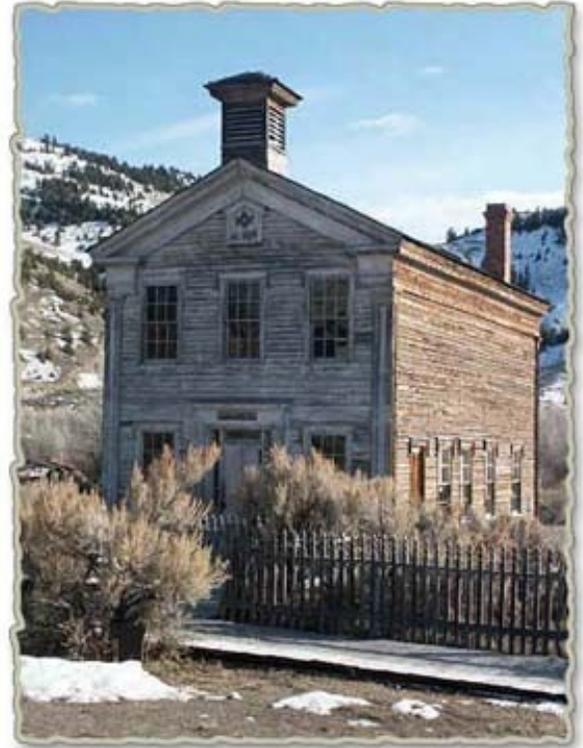
Kempsville Lodge No. 196, A.F.&A.M.
www.kempsvillelodge.org

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Hang 'Em High Masons in the Old West

Bannack Lodge no. 16 was chartered in 1871 under the Grand Lodge of Montana, and its impressive neoclassical structure was built in 1874. Bannack was the first lodge formed in what would become Montana and it received its original dispensation in 1863 from the Grand Lodge of Nebraska. The Lodge ended up not becoming Bannack Lodge No. 1 because of the action of road agents (robbers) who stole the original charter while it was on the way to the lodge. This event and the lodge itself sit at a pivotal point in the formation of Montana and is a story of courage and frontier justice.

Bannack Lodge had its start in a Lodge of Sorrow. In November of 1862 Bannack, a new gold mining town, was beset by road agents. These villains robbed the miners and murdered them at will. They would earn their victims trust then rob or kill them in their camps at night. When Brother William Bell fell victim to mountain fever, he asked his friend Nathaniel Langford for Masonic rights after his death. Langford posted a notice to all Masons in the area to come to the Lodge of Sorrow for Brother Bell's funeral. There was a total of 77 Masons at the funeral, including the dead Brother.



Langford and the other Masons were surprised to find so many good and trustworthy men in a land so inflicted with distrust and brutality. They talked among themselves and resolved to do something, and thus the Montana Vigilantes were born. It is said that while not all Vigilantes were Masons, all Masons there were Vigilantes. They rode forth to put an end to the road agents, and in the process, found out the leader was none other than the local Sheriff, Henry Plummer. Working quickly, the Vigilantes rounded up all the members of the gang, including the Sheriff, put them on trial, and hung them, putting an end to their reign of terror. Afterwards the Vigilantes placed the numbers 3-7-77 on the doors of ne'er do wells as a warning. Some said it was the length of time those people had to leave town, others said it was the dimensions of their graves. One cannot help but notice though that it takes 3 Master Masons to conduct business in a lodge, 7 to open a lodge, and that 77 masons were present in Bannack and formed that first lodge. The only known fact was that anyone who ignored the warning was dealt with harshly.

Today, Bannack lodge continues as Historic Bannack Lodge 3-7-77 under dispensation from the Grand Lodge of Montana. The mission of this lodge is to recall the early days of the gold rush in Montana territory. The lodge stands as a tribute to the courage and perseverance of Montana Masons during troubled times. The mission of the lodge is to work with the Montana park service for the continued stabilization of the original lodge building along with the upkeep of the lodge, its furniture, and paraphernalia. Membership in Bannack Lodge 3-7-77 is open to any Master Mason in good standing with their lodge. A lifetime membership costs \$37.77 and applications are available at <https://www.bannack3777.com>. No degrees are conferred by the lodge but they do meet for an annual stated on the second weekend of September of each year.

From The East



Even though fall is now upon us and the current Masonic year is starting to draw to its inevitable close, our Lodge has been busier than ever. In the month of September, we installed a new audio/visual system in the Lodge that enables us to have Brothers who cannot attend Lodge, either due to distance or health reasons, participate in the non-ritual portions of our meetings. We participated in two half-day practices for the one-day degree conferral that will take place at the beginning of October, and we continue to hold degree training and practice twice a week for our own ritual proficiency. We performed a deep clean of the Lodge kitchen (since it is not currently being used) and we held a superbly executed Senior Warden's Night during our September Stated meeting. We have much more to accomplish in 2020 such as the October Past Master's Night on October 27th and various charitable works for the holidays.

I would like to express my deepest personal gratitude for the unprecedented amount of donations we received to help make up for the shortfall created when we had to cancel our annual Bull Roast due to the COVID-19 virus. Our Lodge members donated over \$8300, and when you consider the fact that we had no overhead/food expenses this year, all that money will be going into our Lodge general and building funds. Whereas before these donations we were over \$2000 in the red on the building fund due to major repairs, we now have a nice cushion that will help us deal with any repairs that may pop up (as they always do). The generosity of our members and other Masonic family members is a tribute to our dedication and love for our Lodge.

I have had several people kindly tell me they were sorry that my year in the East had to be during such a difficult and challenging time. My response is that I would not trade this year as Worshipful Master for any other year. While I would not have wished this pandemic on anyone, the challenges it has presented have forced us to think out of the box and move the Lodge forward in ways that will make us stronger in the future. All our members have stepped up with their support, time, and generosity in a way that has proved what the true meaning of Freemasonry is. Kempsville has been and will continue to be a shining beacon of light for Virginia Masonry and our community during these trying times.

Brother Dave Trzeciakiewicz, Worshipful Master

From The West



Men come to Masonry for many reasons. Because of a relative, because of a friend, because of fellowship, because of curiosity, or maybe because they think they will get ahead. The reason we join is irrelevant.

After joining, we find men who treat us with brotherly love. This, in turn relieves the stress of the day. It also gives us a feeling of self-worth and helps us see the true meaning of Freemasonry.

Please know that your Lodge is still highly active in these challenging times. Maybe not in the way you remember from the past or with the same volume and frequency. However, we are still holding Stated meetings with much of these meetings being broadcast via Zoom. We are still practicing ritual weekly, holding Masonic education via Zoom, collecting for the food bank, holding blood donations, and enjoying Saturday morning fellowship. Please return and join us when you feel comfortable doing so.

Brother Mike Denning, Senior Warden

From The South



Life outside of the Lodge has the tendency to test the capacity of our cable-tows. Civil unrest, a pandemic, and a divisive election serve as roadblocks to the upkeep of our Masonic obligations. As we remember the terrors of Tuesday, September 11th, 2001, these obstacles seem to carry more weight than usual.

2,996 people lost their lives on the day that became known as a "9/11", which is ironically the same as "911", the number that most Americans dial when they need emergency assistance. This irony is compounded by the fact that roughly twelve percent (12%) of those who perished on that day were first responders.

Fortunately, an overwhelming majority of first responders who risked their lives to ameliorate that crisis survived and continue to provide invaluable recounts of the event. The actions of those selfless individuals, some of whom are and were Freemasons, serve as stellar examples of the fulfillment of our Masonic duty to help, aid, and assist.

Freemasonry causes us to pursue excellence in all our endeavors. Using the paths of our Masonic

predecessors who showed the world the true meaning of fraternal altruism, we are thereby the better enabled to grow and excel in our journeys to the East.

Brother John Settle, Junior Warden

Masonic Birthdays for October

Ronnie W. Anglin '71	Geirge E. Habib '80
Robert H. Barton '90	Zahi A. Habre '19
Michael D. Blankenship '17	Anson T. Knowles, Sr. '76
Joseph S. Bloise '03	Andrew L. Levy '99
David W. Broadway '91	George H. Lewis, III '70
G. Ray Bunch, Jr. '80	Robert W. Lewis, Jr. '71
Jonathan W. Bunch '14	Ian W. Marks '96
Donald S. Cale '92	Jimmy R. McDaries '15
Daniel E. Connor '85	Thomas E. Monahan '96
Richard V. Cooper, Jr. '12	Henley A. Morgan, Jr. '87
Thomas H. Cutchins, III '87	Gregory C. Muir '10
Robert H. DeFord, Jr. '54	George W. O'Neal '01
Harold C. Dickerson, Jr. '90	M. Joseph Orman '82
David E. Dodson '76	Marc F. Povondra '83
Thomas F. Doering, Sr. '92	Clyde S. Sheely '69
John A. Donahue '10	Robert W. Stanek '77
George E. Fausel '82	Thomas N. Thomas '88
Fredrick H. Feller '67	Michael A. Turner '18
David H. Foxwell '07	David A. White '00
Jason L. Fuller '11	Jimmie Wilder '75
Tracy L. Gilbert '96	Robert J. Worthington '04
Rodney K. Griffin '16	

The Brethren shown above have a total of 1,201 years in Masonry!

August Beehive Award

The winner of the August Beehive Award is our Lodge Marshall, Brother Dickie Cooper. Brother Dickie does so many things for our Lodge that it is hard to list all his accomplishments here. He is a dedicated member of our Lodge



ritual team and attends every session of our twice-weekly training and degree practice, as well as our monthly online Masonic education. As our Marshall, he ensures that we have all our funeral gear ready and on station when we perform Masonic rites for a departed Brother. He also leads our Lodge investigation committee, who performs the vital task of "guarding our west gate" by meeting with applicants to the Lodge and ensuring that they are morally suitable to sit with us as a Brother. Anyone who knows Dickie also knows that he is the perfect example of a Mason and a gentleman in his kind manner and respectful treatment of others. It is a joy to have Dickie as a

Brother and we look forward to many more sessions in Lodge with him in the years ahead.

Food Bank Collection Breaks One Ton!

Thanks to your generosity, we have met our goal two months early of donating one ton (2000 lbs. for our Past Masters out there) of food donations to our next-door neighbors at the Church of the Ascension food bank. In the month of August, we collected 535 pounds of food, some of which was purchased by our Food Drive Coordinator Brother Bob Hughes using the \$260 in cash that was also donated that month. This puts us at grand total of 2,048 lbs. of food collected for the year. At this point in 2019 for the entire year we had collected 515 lbs. of food!

We will be conducting one more drive-up food drop-off for the food bank on October 31st, in place of our October breakfast (which would have been the last Lodge breakfast for 2020). Rumor is the Worshipful Master will be there in costume to celebrate Halloween. The Lodge has set a "stretch" goal of 3000 lbs. donated for 2020. If we get 500 lbs. of food in September and October, we will easily meet this target! The church is incredibly grateful for all we have done for them and the community.

To Our Masonic Widows

Happy Birthday to our special ladies in October:

Kathy Whitehurst	September 8 th
Linda Ferris	September 14 th
Judith Moyers	September 20 th
Sheryl Stanworth	September 23 rd
Lilo Driscoll	September 28 th
Linda Moore	September 29 th
Carolyn McCoy	September 30 th

If any of our ladies are in need of assistance from the Lodge, please don't hesitate to contact Right Worshipful Bill Knowles or the Secretary.

Lodge Video Teleconferencing Becomes A Reality

In early September, our Junior Deacon, Brother Doug Dunn, installed two 65-inch flat screen TVs on both sides of the East in the Lodge room (much of this was paid for by private donations). Doug ran cables from the TVs through the overhead and down to a laptop by the Secretary's desk which will be operated by a Brother during our meetings. This, combined with WiFi capability we just had

installed at the Lodge and the existing Eastern Star microphones and speakers, enables us to use video teleconferencing tools such as Zoom to enable those who cannot be at Lodge to participate in non-ritual portions of our meetings. We can also record these meetings for later viewing by our members.

We gave this system a test run during Senior Warden's Night at our September Stated and it worked perfectly. We had seven Brothers attend using Zoom, including Right Worshipful Don Meyer, our 1992 Past Master, from his home in Georgia; Brother Mike Turner, who was on travel out of state for work during the Stated, and Brother Dickie Cooper, who participated from home. We were able to award Brother Dickie with his August Beehive award via teleconferencing as he could not attend in person.



1992 Past Master, Right Worshipful Don Meyer addressing the Lodge via Zoom from his home in Georgia during our September Stated meeting

Prepaying 2021 Lodge Dues

Brethren, if you would consider prepaying your 2021 dues early, you can help to save the Lodge a few dollars in mailing and postage costs. To pay online:

- Go to the Lodge website payment center at <https://kempsvilleglodge.org/payment/>
- Select the dues payment, fill in your name, and hit the "Pay Now" button. Make your payment using your credit card.

You may also pay the Lodge by check, cash, or money order for \$117. Mail your payment to 916 Hanover Dr., Virginia Beach, VA 23464-3118. You may also pay the Secretary in person. Anyone paying dues early will not be sent a dues notice, thus saving the Lodge some money. Thank you for considering this option!

Happy 100th Birthday to Brother Spruill!

Many happy returns to Brother Earle Spruill on his 100th birthday, which he celebrated at the end of September at his home in Roanoke, Virginia. The Lodge sent Brother Spruill a happy birthday flower arrangement courtesy of MOTY '19, Brother Karl Wessler, and his wife at Fairfield Flowers. Members of the Lodge also sent Brother Spruill birthday cards and he was sent a letter from the Grand Master of Masons in Virginia recognizing his special day.



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